

CITY OF NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

and the

KRUEGER-SCOTT MANSION CULTURAL CENTER

African American Oral History Project

Questionnaire

A. PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Name?
2. Age?
3. Place of birth?
4. Occupation(s)?

Did you have a primary occupation? What about a secondary occupation? Did your occupation change over time?

5. Education

How far did you go in school?

6. Marriage

What person did you marry? When? Where?  
How did you meet your husband/wife? How long did you know each other before you married?

What kind of work did your husband/wife do?

What are the names of your children? When were they born? Where were they born?

Did you have a "primary relationship" other than marriage? If so, with whom? What was the nature of this relationship? (Apply preceding questions under #6 where appropriate.)

B. FAMILY BACKGROUND

7. Father's name? Place of birth?

8. Mother's name? Place of birth?
9. Names of brothers and sisters (in order of birth)?  
Birthplace of each?
10. Father's occupation?
11. Mother's occupation?
12. Have you changed your name? If so, why did you change your name (e.g., membership in a religious faith, membership in a political organization)? Did others in your family change their names? If so, why?

#### C. MIGRATION TO NEWARK

13. If you migrated to Newark, when did you first decide to leave home? Why did you want to leave? Was your trip planned well in advance? How did you prepare to leave? What year did you leave? What time of the year did you leave? Were attempts made to prevent you from leaving? If so, by whom? Why? Was this your first trip of some distance?
14. Where did you go first after leaving home? Why? How long did you stay there?
15. Were you brought to Newark by others? If so, by whom? Why did they come to Newark?
16. Did you or your family know anyone in Newark before coming here? If so, who?
17. Did anyone tell you about Newark before you came? If so, who? What did they say? Did you have a well-formed image of Newark before you came here?
18. How did you travel in leaving the South (e.g., by boat, train, car, bus)? Who made the travel arrangements? How much did it cost?
19. Do you know anyone who came by boat? Who? What year? What route did they take?
20. What was your journey like? Where did you leave from? What routes did you take? How long did the trip take? Who came with you? What were the conditions like? How much money did you bring with you? Do you have any particular story or anecdote to tell about your trip to Newark?

##### Train/Bus

What segregated facilities were there (e.g., waiting room)? Where did you sit on the train/bus?

Was it clean? Crowded? Was food available? If not, what kind of food did you bring? Why this kind of food? What kind of container?

Car

What segregated facilities did you encounter enroute (e.g., gas stations, hotels/motels, restaurants)? How did you manage?

21. What happened when you arrived in Newark? Who met you?
22. What personal effects did you bring with you? What was your luggage like? What personal effects did you send? What else did you bring/send?
23. Did you plan to return to the South? If so, why?
24. Did you know anyone who came to Newark around this time, stayed briefly, and returned to the South to live? If so, who? Why did they return?
25. Did you know anyone around this time who moved back and forth between the South and Newark periodically? (seasonally, intervals of several years)
26. Did you help anyone leave the South to come to Newark? If so, who? Why?
27. How would you describe your fellow migrants, those who left the South for Newark around the time you did? (e.g., young/old? single/married? educated/uneducated?)
28. What materials (e.g., photographs, travel tickets, luggage, trunks) do you have that pertain to your migration to Newark?
29. How many times have you returned to your home in the South? Why did you return? Do you see your southern birthplace as your "home"? If so, do you plan to return permanently? If so, why?

#### D. SETTLEMENT IN NEWARK

30. Where did you first live in Newark? Why? How long did you stay in this place?
31. What was your first impression of this place? Was it what you had expected?
32. What was your housing like (e.g., boarding house, apartment, single or multi-family unit)? How did you get it? What did it cost?



33. What was your neighborhood like? Was it a commercial area (shops, businesses, factories) or a residential area? What other kinds of people lived there? Did people from your home live there?
34. Why did you settle in this neighborhood?
35. Where next did you live in Newark? Why did you settle in this place? What was your housing like? What was your neighborhood like? (Repeat questions #27-#31 for succeeding residences in Newark.)
36. Where did you do your shopping? On what basis (e.g., race of the owner, location, how you were treated as a customer) did you decide to patronize businesses and shops?
37. What was the ethnicity/race of merchants in your neighborhood? If they were not black, did they employ blacks? Was there any resentment against stores in your neighborhood not owned by blacks? If so, why? How was this resentment shown?
38. Did local stores offer you credit? If yes, did this influence your decision to shop at these stores?
39. How would you compare your experiences in the South with your new experiences in Newark with respect to the following:

eating\_habits: When you came to Newark, were you able to purchase dry goods and foods that were familiar to you in the South? If so, what dry goods and foods? From what stores? What do you know about the appearance of "soul food" in Newark?

dress: In what ways, if any, did people in Newark dress differently from people in your southern home?

contact\_with\_relatives/existence\_of\_an\_"extended\_family": Were relatives and friends as helpful and supportive here in Newark as they had been in your southern home? Were you part of an "extended family" in Newark?

designation\_of\_"fictive\_kin": Did you call people "Aunt" and "cousin" here in Newark when they were not really a relative? If so, why?

marking\_of\_special\_events: Were events such as births, weddings, and funerals observed differently here in Newark than in your southern

home? If so, in what ways were they different?

celebration\_of\_holidays: Were holidays like Christmas, Easter, Fourth of July, and Thanksgiving celebrated differently in Newark than in your southern home? If so, how did the celebrations differ?

use\_of\_intoxicants\_and\_other\_substances: How did the use of items like liquor, drugs, tobacco (e.g., pipes, cigars, cigarettes, snuff, chewing tobacco) in Newark compare with their use in your southern home? What about substances like clay/dirt and starch?

traditional\_medical\_practices: How did the use of such as home remedies, patent medicines, and midwives in Newark compare with the use of such in your southern home?

belief\_in\_"fixing": How did the belief in and practice of such as "conjure," "voodoo," "hoodoo," and "roots" in Newark compare with such in your southern home?

pets: How were pets regarded in Newark in comparison with your southern home?

crime/"juvenile\_delinquency": How did the incidence of crime in Newark compare with that in your southern home? What about crimes involving juveniles?

self-help: What was your perception of blacks helping each other in Newark? Did it compare favorably with blacks helping each other in your southern home?

race\_relations: How would overall relations with whites in Newark compare to relations with whites in your southern home?

40. What major customs and traditions from the South do you recall surviving in Newark? What about "cookouts" and "barbecues"?
41. What things (e.g., hunting, fishing, trapping, gathering berries) do you recall doing in the South that you did not do once you came to Newark?
42. How were you received or treated by African Americans who had lived in Newark for a long time?
43. Do you know of any part of Newark where black people

from a particular part of the South (e.g., state, town) have settled together? If so, give details.

#### E. WORK

44. What kind of work did you do in the South before coming to Newark? What was your wage? What skills did you have? How did you get them?
45. What was your first job in Newark? How did you get it? What did you do? How long did you have this job? How did you regard this job? Based on your work experiences in the South, what major adjustments did you have to make regarding this job?
46. How far was the job from your home? How did you get to work?
47. What were your work conditions like (e.g., wage, hours, work week, regularity)?
48. Did you work with people from your own southern home? Did you get along well with other workers?
49. What groups did you work with? Did their racial attitudes differ? Did you learn to speak the language of any particular group?
50. How were you treated by your supervisor? Were you treated the same as others? Were certain tasks reserved for certain groups? If so, what groups and what tasks?
51. Was there a union? Did you join the union? Were you active in the union?
52. Were there any strikes? If so, how long did they last? What were the issues? Did you join these strikes? If so, how did you manage during them?
53. What was your next job (repeat questions #38-#45)?
54. Did you ever do any casual or part-time work? If so, what kind? For how long?
55. Were you ever unemployed? If so, for how long? How did you manage during this period?
56. What were the common occupations for black men/women in Newark when you came? Did blacks enter new occupations during your residence in Newark? If so, what occupations? When?
57. What materials (e.g., photographs, pay stubs, uniforms) do you have that pertain to your work experiences in Newark?



## F. INSTITUTIONAL ACTIVITIES

58. What church do you belong to? (Where appropriate, substitute mosque, temple, synagogue, etc., for "church.") How active has your religious life been? When did you begin being active? What positions do/did you hold in your church? What roles do/did you play in your church? What do you know about the history of your church? Who are/were its outstanding ministers/members? What do you consider to be its major accomplishments? What materials (e.g., photographs, records) do you have that pertain to your religious activities?
59. How much have you participated in social and cultural activities in Newark? What social and cultural clubs/organizations (e.g., Elks, Masons, Eastern Star, bridge clubs, literary societies, choral ensembles, benevolent associations) do/did you belong to? When did you first join them? What positions do/did you hold in them? What roles have you played in them? What do you know about the history of these clubs/organizations? Who are/were their outstanding leaders/members? What do you consider to be their major accomplishments? What materials (e.g., photographs, programs, uniforms) do you have that pertain to your social and cultural activities?
60. How much have you participated in political activities in Newark? What political organizations (e.g., political parties, protest groups) do/did you belong to? When did you first join them? What positions do/did you hold in them? What roles have you played in them? What do you know about the history of these organizations? Who are/were their outstanding leaders/members? What do you consider to be their major accomplishments? What materials (e.g., photographs, records, posters, banners) do you have that pertain to your political activities?
61. How much have you participated in community activities? What community organizations (e.g., neighborhood groups, civic organizations) do/did you belong to? When did you first join them? What positions do/did you hold in them? What roles have you played in them? What do you know about the history of these organizations? Who are/were their outstanding leaders/members? What do you consider to be their major accomplishments? What materials (e.g., photographs, charters, plaques, awards, flyers) do you have that pertain to your community activities?
62. Aside from being a consumer of regular goods and services, in what ways did you participate in the economic life of the community? Did you ever

own/operate your own business? If so, why? What kind of a business? Size? Location? Is it still functioning? What is/was the significance of your business? Did you purchase stock in any black-owned business or enterprise? If so, which one(s)? What materials (e.g., photographs, business records) do you have that pertain to your economic activities?

#### G. COMMUNITY LIFE

63. How did you get information on the news and events of the community? Did you read a black newspaper? If so, which one? Did you listen to a black-oriented radio station? If so, which one?
64. What was the relationship between black Newark and other black communities in New Jersey? Did you visit other black communities in the state? If yes, which one(s)? Why?
65. What outstanding blacks did you meet or hear in Newark?
66. What do you remember about such public servants as the police, firefighters, social workers, etc.?
67. When you or others in your neighborhood got in "trouble" or needed help to solve a problem, to whom in Newark did you turn? Why? How effective were they in helping you or others?
68. How was black Newark perceived? Was the community seen as a slum?
69. Did all classes of African Americans live close to you? If so, how did they get along with each other?
70. Other than white store owners and other whites with a vested economic interest, do you recall any other whites having an interest in the black community?
71. Did you shop downtown? If so, at which stores? Why? What do you consider to have been Newark's best stores?
72. What incidents involving racial discrimination in Newark have you experienced? Give details.
73. What do you remember about the "Mayor of Springfield Avenue"?
74. What do you remember regarding such local personalities as William Ashby (early black social worker), Meyer Ellenstein (Newark's first Jewish mayor), Prosper Brewer (Newark's first black policeman), Irvine Turner (Newark's first black elected official)?



75. What do you remember regarding black institutions like hospitals, hotels, and banks? Where were they located? How important were they to the black community? Were you served by such institutions? What individuals do you remember being associated with such institutions?
76. What do you recall regarding the kinds of music that one heard in black Newark? Do you remember listening to and/or seeing musicians perform jazz, gospel, or the blues? At what places? What musicians?
77. In what leisure-time activities (e.g., singing, storytelling, quilting, basket weaving, gardening, movies, playing sports) did you engage? What materials (e.g., photographs, quilts, baskets, bats and gloves) do you have that pertain to these activities?
78. What can you tell us about the Newark Eagles? Did you attend any of their games? Were there other black athletic/sports events you attended? What materials (e.g., score cards, pennants) do you have that pertain to such events?
79. What do you recall regarding the seamy side of black Newark life? What places/locations were involved? Do you recall any black gangsters? In what activities did they engage? What, if any, positive contributions did they make to the life of the community? How were they perceived by the community?
80. What do you recall regarding public education in Newark? How well academically did black students seem to perform? How were they treated by white teachers/students? Were black students involved in intramural sports and/or extracurricula activities? What black teachers do you recall?
81. What would you consider to be the five most important events/developments that have occurred in Newark during your residence here (e.g., strike, election, riot, fire, natural disaster, black in-migration)? Why? What was your personal involvement in these events/developments? What do you know about them? What materials (e.g., photographs, documents, placards) do you have that pertain to them?
82. In what major ways has Newark changed since you first arrived here? How do you view the changes that have occurred?
83. What traditions/celebrations/events in Newark that you witnessed in the past no longer exist? What happened to them? How do you feel about their disappearance?

84. When do you feel black life in Newark reached its highest peak? What was so great about this particular time? When you do feel black life in Newark reached its lowest point? What was so bad about this particular time?

#### H. LOUISE SCOTT/KRUEGER-SCOTT MANSION

85. What do you recall regarding Louise Scott? Did you know her? Did you ever meet her? What was the community's perception of her? Did you ever visit her home on High Street?
86. What do you know about the High Street area in which the Krueger-Scott Mansion is found? Did you or anyone you know work for any the families in the High Street area?
87. What do you know about the occupants of the Mansion who preceded Louise Scott? Did you or anyone you know work at any of the city's breweries?

#### I. OTHER

88. How would you sum up your experience of living in Newark?
89. If you had your life to live over, would you live in Newark? Give reasons for your answer.